



281.890.1900
TheMETonline.org

Jones Road Campus
13000 Jones Road | Houston, TX 77070

Fry Road Campus | Hopper Middle School
7811 Fry Road | Houston, TX 77433

[Introductory video shows a typical suburban home with a minivan in the driveway then moves to multiple scenes, presumably occurring throughout the day:]

[Teenage daughter says to father who has just brought her a plate of food:]
You've got to be kidding me! I want sunny-side up.

[As wife passes her husband in the hallway as he's tightening his tie, she says:] You're not going to wear *that*, are you?

[Teenage daughter in front passenger seat of car says to her father/driver:]
Daddy, stop. Are you crazy? I do *not* want my friends to see you.

[Husband is coming in the front door with their teenage daughter and wife says:] Hey, since you're already up, I need you to go to the grocery store. And this time get the stuff that's on the list please. [Husband takes the list from his wife, turns immediately around, and heads back out the door.]

[Husband sits down on the couch, rests his head back, and puts one foot up on the coffee table as his wife comes in and hands him a cupcake with a single candle stuck in the middle, saying:] Oh, by the way, happy birthday.

[Video ends with today's message title displayed:] *You Can't Please Everyone*

[The stage is still dark. Pastor Sal, not visible, is heard speaking from the tunnel:] Okay, almost show time. Get your game-face on, Sal—got a tough job ahead of me now, because these people are so hard to please. I've got to deliver though. I've got to do a good job so they'll come back. That's what I do. I've got to make them happy, because last week some of them weren't happy. A lot of them didn't like my haircut. They didn't like my hair long and now they don't like my hair short. I can't please these people. Okay, wait a minute; get that out of your mind. Get focused, bro. You've got to do good so they'll come back. I've got to make them happy. I should've never said what *skubala* meant last week, because it *did* happen, man! I've got to do better, got to do good, got to make them like me. I've got to make them like this one. Come on, man! I can do it.

[The stage lights have come on and Pastor Bill Norman hurries across the stage to the tunnel where Pastor Sal is waiting for his cue—he says:] Dude, your mic's on. You missed your cue again.

[Pastor Sal:] Okay, you're kidding me, man. [As he's walking on stage:] Okay, hmmm, the surest way to forget what God thinks about you is to obsess on what other people think about you.

Well, welcome back. This is the second week in our series: *You Don't Have What It Takes*. Today we are talking about what all of us probably mentally give assent to, but it is very difficult to practice practically; and that is: No matter how hard you try, you can never please everybody.

YOU CAN'T PLEASE EVERYONE

(Now) the words that you heard a few moments ago—when I was in the tunnel—were words that I had already typed out. It was a setup, but there's a lot of truth in it (you know?) because those thoughts go through my mind. I've said some of those very (very) words; because in reality I like people to like me. I want people to come and say what a great guy I am, even if I'm not a great guy. So I feel—real or imagined—pressure all the time to do a good job so that you'll come back; because if I don't do a good job, you won't come back. And it's a real, unhealthy temptation for me—and really for all of us—to surrender our lives for the opinions of others.

Man, I'll tell you that is the hardest thing spiritually in my life to get a grasp on, because when you think you can't—you say: Okay, I can't please everybody—so the enemy in our mind makes us think (well):

- Maybe then—though I can't please everybody—I'll just try to please as many people as I can; and if I have the majority on my side, then I'm going to be okay (or)
- He'll get us to think: Okay, I can't please everybody but there are some people I'm going to have to please because if they're not happy, I'm not happy. Guys, do you know what I'm talking about? (or)
- Maybe it's your boss or whoever it is: So if I can keep these people happy here, then that's all I need to do; so whatever it takes to make them happy, that's what I am going to do. I am going to please them.

But here's the truth: None of us have been designed by God to please everybody, but we have been designed to please God.

So here's what I want us to say together—you ready?): I can't please everyone—say that—[congregation echoes]. Gosh, you guys are awake today. But (that would be the next one)—but...I can please God [congregation echoes]. Let's say that again: I can't please everyone, but I can please God [congregation echoes each phrase].

I CAN'T PLEASE EVERYONE, BUT I CAN PLEASE GOD

So if you get anything out of this message today, get that: You can't please everyone—God never designed us that way—but we can please Him. So I want to talk today about gaining the approval—not of people, but—of God; to live our lives basically for an audience of One, our Heavenly Father.

The apostle Paul encountered the kind of pressure we're talking about this morning. He had founded the church in Galatia. And now they're writing back to him and they said: Hey (you know) we've got some people among us now [who] are saying that it's not enough just to have Jesus; but you've got to have Jesus plus circumcision. They were Judiazers. And so he writes back to them and—

- Because he wanted to please everybody (and)
- Because he wanted to make sure that both sides weren't going to be offended (and)

- Because he wanted to keep his status as a Jew (and)
- ...he wanted to keep his status as a Christian

He just (kind of) toned down his message and he really didn't confront the issues; but he, rather, negotiated a peace treaty. And if you know your Bible, that's not true. What did he say?—he said: It's by faith and faith alone—period [*Galatians 2:16* (paraphrased)]. When he did that, he made a lot of enemies. Everyone that believed the opposite of that hated Paul. And he realized: You know what?—I can't please everyone, but I can please God.

So he says in *Galatians, chapter 1, verse 10*— (If you don't have a Bible, there's one in the pew rack in front of you. You take that, please, as our gift. If someone's already taken it from the last service, just look up here on the screens. And then let Bill Norman know that they did and he will go out and buy you one—all right?—or rather go across the street and take one that's probably in my office and give it to you.) All right, so he didn't change his message. Here's what he says:

Obviously, I'm not trying to be a people pleaser! {He said:} No, I am trying to please God. If I were still trying to please people, {You ready? Let's all say these last words together—up on the screen:} I would not be Christ's servant.

Galatians 1:10 (NLT, 1996 edition)

Now this is what he said—he said: If I'm trying to please everybody, then I'm really not trying to please God. If I'm trying to please everybody, I'm not serving God; I'm serving what people want rather than what God wants. I can't please everyone, but I can please God.

So the question this morning is (that we need to ask ourselves): **Am I a people pleaser?** Like I have been in struggle with through so many seasons of my life, it's easier in the temporary time—in the immediate time—to please people many times than it is to please God. So, how do I know I am a people pleaser? Well, there [are] some basic characteristics of people pleasers.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE PLEASERS

Here they are:

(1) PEOPLE PLEASERS TAKE MOST CRITICISM PERSONALLY

In other words, if somebody criticizes you, it acts like—

- You're devalued as a person.
- You're devastated by it; it hurts.
- You just feel like that that person is attacking you.
- You take it personally.

Now, the truth—ready?—it's confession time. You're in church so you've got to tell the truth, all right? By the raising of your hands, how many of you take criticism personally? I do. I do; I take it personally.

The second thing is that:

(2) PEOPLE PLEASERS FEEL AN EXTRAORDINARY FEAR OF REJECTION

An extraordinary fear of rejection: Don't reject me. Please like me. I'll do whatever it takes so you don't reject me. That's how a lot of girls get in trouble with guys:

- I just don't want to lose you.
- I'll do whatever it takes.
- I'll please you—do whatever it takes—whatever you want me to do.

Have you ever felt like I can't let this person reject me?

- That's why we wear the clothes we do
- Drive the things that we do
- Say the things that we do

[It's] because we don't want to be rejected. How many of you ever suffer from the fear of rejection? And how many of you suffer from lying? [In response to so few raised hands:]

All right, so the third:

(3) PEOPLE PLEASERS FIND IT HARD TO EXPRESS THEIR TRUE FEELINGS

Do you know why that is?—because they don't want to hurt you. Because if they hurt you:

- You're going to reject them (and)
- You're going to criticize them (and)
- We take that personally and we don't want to be rejected
- We want you to think that we're great people

So we're really not going to express our true feelings. I'd like to tell you what I think, but I'm afraid that if I do that, you are not going to like me.

How many of you have ever found it difficult to express your true feelings because you don't want to be rejected, your feelings hurt, or hurt their feelings? (Now the rest of you still lie, okay?—no, you really don't. But this next one is true of you.)

(4) PEOPLE PLEASERS HAVE A HARD TIME SAYING NO

You tend to—oh...yeah...hmmm (that's every mom out there) oooh, yes—you tend to over commit. And if you're like me, you can be very agreeable on the outside, but on the inside I'm just steaming.

I can't tell you how many times I've been up at the church till 10:00 at night because somebody asked me: Will you come to this meeting?—and I say: Well, sure, I'm your pastor. (But) on the inside I'm saying: Oh, gosh, when are you ever going to leave me alone? I need my down time. [I say]: Oh, when's the time?—okay, I'll be there. [Inside]: Ugh!—I hate going and doing this stuff. But I don't want you to think that I'm a bad pastor; and so I'm going to say: Sure. [But inside]: Ugh!—I'm going to avoid you the next time I see you.

How many of you ever had a hard time saying no?—yeah, there we go.

There's a book by Harriet Braiker called, *The Disease to Please*. That's a great little phrase: the disease to please. Here's what she says: People pleasers are addicts. They are addicted. Just as a drug addict seeks drugs, people pleasers seek approval.

Now isn't that the case? (I mean) there are some healthy [aspects of] getting approval, like from your parents and people who are doing a great job. But then there's the unhealthy aspect of people pleasing. It's so unhealthy—this will be a pretty tough statement, but I believe it's true and we'll see in a second: people-pleasing really is a form of idolatry.

PEOPLE-PLEASING IS A FORM OF IDOLATRY

(Because) when we surrender our lives to the opinion of people instead of the opinion of God, we're elevating people to a position that only God deserves; and we're lowering God's position to a place that only people deserve. It's more of a spiritual problem than a relational or social problem. It's idolatry.

You don't go public—if you're a believer—you don't go public with your faith because you're afraid you're going to be criticized. You're afraid someone's going to reject you. You're afraid that—you don't show your true feelings of how you feel about Jesus because you don't want to hear what they think about you if they don't like that.

- That's why a lot of you in this room have never been baptized, because you're afraid of what your parents are going to say and you're 50 years old. Why?—because I don't want to make Mom think less of me and I don't want to hurt her feelings by telling her the truth.
- (Or) you haven't even told your friends about Christ because you're afraid that you're not going to fit any more. And they're going to reject you and they're going to criticize you for it.

It's idolatry...it's idolatry. You need to publicly speak out about Christ. The first step is being baptized. And I strongly encourage you that if you want the kind of faith that really is life-changing, that really affects the lives of the people around you, don't be a secret agent saying: Come out, come out wherever you are. Come out and let them know that you love Jesus. The first sign is by being baptized. So if you haven't done that, sign up soon.

Now, why is it that we have that fear? Why is it that we fear people? Why is it that we don't step out in our faith?—here it is in *John's Gospel, chapter 12, verses 42 and 43*:

⁴² ...But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith {—now these were the people that were following Jesus back when He was on His earthly ministry, but they wouldn't confess it—} for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; {—they wouldn't be in the cool

club anymore. Let's read these last words together up on the screen—ready? Here they go—ready?—follow me (as soon as I find it again follow me)—} ⁴³ for they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

John 12:42-43 (NIV)

Idolatry...idolatry. How do you know that you're a people pleaser?

I guess the first time I can really recollect that I started understanding the trap of being a people pleaser; I think I was in (like) the seventh grade, and my girlfriend happened to be living next door to me. She was on the swim team and she was having this big party over there. So I thought: Okay, man, I'm going to put my party rags on. So, man, I dressed up as well as I could for what we had at the time. (And) I walked over to her house so I could make the entrance when all of the people were there.

I heard this guy say: I can't believe he dressed up for the party. Everybody was saying: Oh, I can't believe! So I left the house and I went back to my house, changed into my more casual stuff, and came back. And the same guy said: I can't believe that he dressed down so much for this party. So I walked out and I went in [to my house], and I put the cool pants on, the dressy pants on, the casual shirt on, and one shoe of each; and walked back in and it still wasn't good enough.

You know how I resolved that? I beat him up and broke up with her and said: I'm not coming to any more to your parties.

But isn't that the case?—(I mean) we do that. What do people want? If we know what they want, we're going to try to give them what they want. And maybe it's not exactly what God wants us to do. There are some traps—*Proverbs, chapter 29*—

PEOPLE PLEASING TRAPS

Here's what it says:

Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.

Proverbs 29:25 (NIV)

That word [*snare*] means a noose or a hook for the nose—not a nose piercing, however, a nose hook: not a tiny, nice diamond that may be fashionable, but a hook that they would put in your nose [pantomimes a nose-hook using his finger]: Now, follow me. Everywhere the hook goes, I've got to go. Now, that means that if I want you to like me, you just tell me what you want me to do. Whatever you want me to do I'm going to do it, because I don't want to feel rejection and I don't want to be hurt. Oh—

- I've got to buy the clothes.
- I've got to buy the car.

- I've got to buy the house.
- I've got to dress like that.

Well then, I'll go borrow money so that I can do all of those things. Oh—

- How do you like my clothes? (and)
- How do you like my shoes? (and oh)
- Did I fit in?
- Is my breath okay?
- What about my hair, is it up to style? (and)

You're just [dragged] around pleasing people with a hook in your nose.

Now, I know you can see this (because my nose is already big enough). It's a hook. It's a trap. God says that when we start pleasing people, we're not in control of our lives any more. We do whatever they want us to do. You're hooked, hog-tied, and trapped by the snare of people pleasing.

What do some of those traps look like? Here's one:

(1) "I WILL COMPROMISE FOR YOU" TRAP

In other words:

- Here's what I believe about life.
- Here's what I believe about God.
- This is what God has taught me about my values.

But I will compromise them for you to be able to accept me, because I don't want to be rejected by you. I don't want you to criticize me.

A lot of this happens between dating couples or single couples or kids in high school [or] junior high and sexual pressure is on (and)—

- Maybe the guy is pressing the girl and the girl is thinking: Oh, but if I don't do this, then he's going to think that I don't love him and I don't want him. So rather than him thinking that about me and me hurting him for some reason by telling him my true feelings about what I believe, let's just have sex and they compromise (or)
- Maybe it's the girl pressuring the guy; and the girl is the one that wants to have the sexual episode and the guy's going: Man, if I don't do this, what are the guys going to think about me?—I'm not going to be a man. And so what is she going to say about me if I don't do this? So they get together and they compromise.

They compromise; that's how that stuff happens.

Let me give you a solution to that. This I promise you—this one thing—if you'll do this, you will never find yourself in a sexually compromising situation ever, ever. Are you ready? Have you got your pen and your pencil? Here you go; write this down. I'm telling you, this works. Of all of the advice I've ever given you, this one piece of advice here will change your life. Are you ready? Find a great big family Bible—I mean a big one like (you know) the one that's got family

records and everything—big, giant. *King James* even works better, because the words are longer and there'll be more pages, okay? When you guys go out on your date, get into the car, and the first thing you do is you take that big *King James* family Bible and you put it right between you. And you're going to find out—real difficult—for you or him to jump over *Matthew, Mark, Luke* and *John* to get to each other. So, there should be a run on *LifeWay* [Christian bookstore] this afternoon.

“I will compromise for you” trap—

- That's why we don't witness.
- That's why we don't tell people about Christ.
- That's why we're not baptized—I'm just going to compromise because I don't want to be rejected by you.
- That's why we cheat at work to please our boss—do whatever we can do to get the sale; do whatever we can do to make the numbers look right.

Secondly is: I not only will compromise for you—

(2) “I WILL OVER-COMMIT FOR YOU” TRAP

I care so much about what you think about me that I'm going to do more than what I should so that you would think highly of me. Let me tell you, that's a church trap (by the way). Many of us volunteer so much because if (we feel like) we do that, then certainly everybody else is going to think better of us. Because look: I'm doing more than anybody else does. But you're not doing it to please God. You are doing it to gain the approval of man so that you can be in whatever elite class that you can say: I don't do or I do those things; and I will do anything that you ask me to do. You over-commit yourself.

And I want to tell you we live in a culture that's so over committed already. There are so many time demands on people based upon what the world thinks that we ought to be doing.

Let me tell you, that's why many of us are the slaves of our children. Because the world thinks if you're going to be a good father or a good mother then you're going to provide this and you're going to provide that. So you've got two or three jobs so—

- They can have Nintendos® (and)
- They can have GameStations© (and)
- They can go to private school (and)
- They can have the cool clothes (and then)
- They can go to soccer practice (and)
- They can go to baseball and cheerleading

And all you are is a glorified chauffeur with money. Does that even make sense?—it doesn't.

Let me remind you of something. You're the grown up. It's your car. It's your money and your time. Take control of the situation. Don't over-commit.

Third thing:

(3) “I WILL LET YOU LIMIT MY SUCCESS” TRAP

I will let you limit my success. God is maybe calling some of you—

- To own your own business (or)
- To work in a company

And He is elevating you in that.

- Maybe He has called you to the ministry (or)
- Maybe you’re in the ministry

And rather than sticking to the plan that God is giving you, rather than being the leader that God has called you to be; it’s easier for you to compromise. Because you have found out that the more that you do and the higher that God causes you to rise in the organization—or even in your family—the more people are not going to like you.

Try this, the next time one of your kids come home and they ask you for something that you know that’s just not going to be good (but normally you would just give in to it just to have a little peace and quiet) just say this: No. No, we’re not going to do that.

Here’s the response you’re going to get: Oh father you are so wise. Good nurturing. I would have not been able to see such destruction coming in my life for partaking of such an event like this. Oh merciful father, thank you for your guidance and love and trust in my life. Oh if you would only be with me 24/7.

Do you think that is going to happen? No! [Instead you’ll hear]: Why can’t I? You don’t love me. Mom would let me do it if she were here.

Now take that times 10 when you go to work; take that times 8000 when you’re the pastor of this church. That’s what you get: Why won’t you? Because we’re either going to follow God—

- In our families
- In our personal life
- In our companies
- In your companies
- In this church

Or we are going to be bowing down to the pleasure and to the whim of man; and it is idolatry. It’s idolatry.

I want to give you what you want, believe me I do. It’s a lot easier when you think good of me than when you think bad of me. But there are some things that if I do, they’re are not from God. And some of you aren’t going to like it. And sometimes half of you aren’t going to like it. But if I start giving it to one or two or three or this group or that group, where does that leave us?—Way away from where God wants us to be. So when you pray for me say:

Lord, let the pastor not do his will; let the pastor not do our will; but let the pastor do Your will. Because if he does, then all of these other things don’t matter and we’ll have exactly what You want us to have.

Okay? So how do we—then—find the antidote for this?

THE FEAR OF GOD IS THE BEST ANTIDOTE FOR THE FEAR OF MAN

I'm going to tell you: I know this, because I struggle with this every single day. Many of you do as well. But the fear of God is the best antidote for the fear of man. When people are too big in your life and their opinion is too big in your life, then God and His opinion is too small in your life. When people are big, God is small. When God is big, people are small.

So in the book of *Psalms*, chapter 34, verse 9, this is what David says:

Let the LORD's people show him reverence, for those who honor him {now say these last words with me—ready?} will have all they need.

Psalm 34:9 (NLT, 1996 edition)

Let's say that again: "will have all they need." Why do we please people? Because there is something that we want from them—that we need. And we're afraid that if we don't tell the truth, if we don't compromise, if we don't commit to what they want; then we're not going to get what [we] need.

God says no-no-no-no-no, don't do that. You fear and reverence Me and I promise you: you will have all that you need—everything.

So when God is big and you honor God first and He is first in your life, then you're not going to need the approval of people because we have the approval of God. You're not going to have to compromise your values.

(1) YOU WON'T COMPROMISE YOUR VALUES WHEN GOD IS FIRST

You're not going to have to give in to what that person wants you to do because you're going to say: Look God is big in my life and I'm not going to let you make me compromise to keep me from what God has for me in my life. You will be different than everybody else when you do that, I promise you.

(2) YOU WILL BE DIFFERENT WHEN GOD IS FIRST

Read the *New Testament*. Here's one thing I know for sure about Christians in the *New Testament*: they were different from everybody else.

- You will be different.
- The way you spend your money will be different.
- What you do with your time will be different.
- How you raise your children will be different.
- How you act—in the opinions of everybody else—will be different; you're just going to be different.

(3) YOU'RE NOT GOING TO OVER-COMMIT WHEN GOD IS FIRST

You're going to know that it's God who is [the] number-one priority and then I've got family that I'm going to have to deal with—not deal with, but (you know, that's probably not a good term)—

- Then there's family that I need to spend time with
- Then there's church that I want to be doing
- Then, if there's time, I will do these other things

But those are your priorities.

And if you go to work and you say work is number one, like every body in the world wants you to do for them, then—guess what?—God's not going to be number-one. Or if your husband or wife is number-one, or your kids are number-one; guess who isn't number-one? And that is idolatry. It's idolatry. (I hope I don't hit my head [while picking up dropped notes] You know I've done that before on several occasions by the way.)

So [recapping:]

- The fear of God is the best antidote for the fear of people.
- You're not going to compromise
- You're not going to over-commit

And guess what else? You're not going to let the opinions of others keep you from the vision that God has for your life.

(4) GOD'S VISION FOR ME WON'T BE LIMITED WHEN GOD IS FIRST

Now here's how you know if God has a vision—

- For your life
- For your family
- For your business
- For your career
- For your church

—when people say and give opinion about what you are doing and how you are doing it. You can respond and say: Yeah God spoke to me and this is what He said and this is the way that I'm going to do it. I know it's different from what you want, but you know what? This is what God wants out of my life.

So your success is not going to be limited because God said: I can't take you any further right now because you're not listening to Me, you're listening to people; and every time you listen to people you start going down and you quit going up.

Do you know why the apostle Paul could do so much?

- How he could have found so many churches
- ...so many people won to Christ?
- ...have written all of those books he did in the *New Testament*?

1 Thessalonians, chapter 2—listen to what he says:

- ⁴ ...We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts.
⁶ We were not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else....

1 Thessalonians 2:4b, 6a (NIV)

Here's what he is saying: Look, I want you to understand something. We're never seeking the praise of men.

Here is an obstacle in your way [illustrated by a tight fist held up]. It's normally a person. Here's that person that gives an opinion to you [illustrated by an index finger held up in front of the fist] and says: You will listen to this opinion; you will do this. And—

- If you fear men because of your fear of rejection
- ...you take criticism personally (or)
- ...you feel like this guy is going to limit your success if you don't do what they want you to do—

Here's what you say: I bow down to you; you're god [illustrated by the index finger pointing toward the fist]. That's idolatry.

But if you say (you know) respectfully [illustrated by index finger pointing upright again]: I just need to tell you that this is how God wants me to run my life. (What did Paul say? It's a test of the heart.) Here's what you're going to find, this person [the fist] isn't god; but there is a big God over this little person and if He has to—

- He will send you around them
- He'll send you over them
- He'll send you through them (or)
- He'll send you under them

But He will accomplish His will in your life if you don't bow down to the pressure of other people, if you don't do that.

God wants us not to be consumed with what they think; that's the fastest way to forget about what God thinks about us. "...do not conform to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" [*Romans 12:2 (NASB)*].

The only way to overcome the fear of man is to be so saturated with respect and awe of God that you know no matter what, He's going to give me everything that I need. The only antidote for fear of what people think is:

- For God to be bigger in your life than other people
- To seek Him more than you seek other people
- To fear Him more than you fear other people
- To surrender to Him more than you want to surrender to other people
- To know Him more than you want to know other people

Let Him become bigger and set us free [from] the opinions of people that are so small. It's the only way that we are ever—ever—going to please God.

Let's bow our heads and close our eyes for a moment. Let's ask God to do a work in our lives:

Father, do something in us that's big and huge. Do it deep within/inside of us. God, I know in my own life that I've been consumed with the people's opinions and other's opinions of me rather than You; and what they want and not what You want. I want to be consumed with Your opinion of yours and yours alone. God, I pray that You would set us free as a church; and set me free, Lord, from that.

If you are here this morning and you resonate with that prayer and you can say:

- I see that; I know that; I recognize that (as you were going through that message this morning)
- My life is so much painted by the opinions of others and I want to be set free.
- I want to live for an audience of One.
- I want God to be bigger in my life than anyone else.

If that's you today, with nobody looking around, would you just lift your hand up right now? All over the place and just lift them up high, all the way up if you say, "That's me; that's me; that's me." I join with you, my brother and sister. Let me pray for us.

God, I ask You now, Lord, that You would so do a work in our lives that being respectful and loving and kind to all the people in ministering to people would not turn into pleasing people more than pleasing You. God, I pray that You' give us the disposition of a Daniel, who did everything that the king wanted; but when it came to going against You, he just wouldn't do it.

So God I pray that You would grant us favor in your eyes Lord. Then I know that You will grant us favor in the eyes of people whether they agree with us or not.

So I pray for my brothers and sisters and myself this morning that You would fall fresh and new on us. And, not out of a prideful spirit or out of an arrogant spirit, but just out of a very humble spirit, that we would let people know that God is bigger in my life than any person here. I pray it transform marriages and families and parenting and jobs and callings on our lives.

If you're here this morning, maybe you need to take a really drastic step to please God. Like all of us who know God personally had to take; that is, simply admitting that you don't know God. You want to please Him, but you've never put your faith in Him. The Bible says without faith it's impossible to please God. You, for the first time, this morning need to put your faith in Jesus Christ. If that's you and you've never done that before, I want you to raise your hand high because I want to pray for you now. All over this room—down on the lower floors, up in the balcony—if that's us, just raise your hand. I know it's difficult, I know because I've had to do it before. But I can tell you this: if you don't stand here, you're not going to stand out there. Lift your hand up high; I need to pray for you. I see your hand. If that's you, in your heart pray this prayer with me:

Dear God, I want to surrender my whole life to You. I want You to save me. I want You to be on the throne of my life. I want You to be the Lord of everything in my life. I completely surrender to You. Today I take the bold step of faith and say: I don't care what anybody thinks; I surrender my life to You, Jesus. Would You be my Savior? Would You be my Lord?

If you just prayed that prayer, I'm going to ask you (with nobody looking around) just put your hand up in the air right now to say: I'm not ashamed; I don't care what other people think; I care what God thinks. Because—you know what?—it doesn't matter what they think; it matters what God thinks. (In a moment Pastor Zach [King, *Student and College Pastor*] is going to come out and tell you some next steps to take because of your new faith in Christ.)

Father, thank You that we don't have to have people be so big in our lives that You are small. That You can be big in our lives and we can still love people and minister to them, but we do not have to be controlled by their opinions. Deliver us, God, from the fear of man and allow our church to be a church that truly loves God and loves people, in that order. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Lead Pastor: Dr. Sal Sberna

The MET
Metropolitan Baptist Church
13000 Jones Rd
Houston, TX 77070

Sermon Transcript Ministry
resource@TheMETonline.org

**But people are counted as righteous,
not because of their work, but
because of their faith in God who forgives sinners.**

Romans 4:5

(New Living Translation, 2004 edition)

Legend:

(words in parentheses) = spoken by the preacher *but unnecessary* to the core sentence idea

[words in square brackets] = additional explanation for clarity *not spoken* by the preacher

{words in curly brackets within indented quote} = spoken explanation *not part of the quote*